

# THE WILSON BULLETIN

NO. 111

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF ORNITHOLOGY

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VOL. XXXII

JUNE, 1920

NO. 2

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OLD SERIES VOL. XXXII. NEW SERIES VOL. XXVII.

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## LIST OF BIRDS MADE DURING EIGHTEEN MONTHS' SERVICE IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

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Read before the Chicago Ornithological Society, June 10, 1919.

During the war I was in the artillery, with the 42d, or Rainbow Division, which saw eighteen months' service in France and Germany, from October 19, 1917, to April 19, 1919. While in France I had but little time to give to birds, and most of my observations were made while on duty. During our three and a half months' stay in Germany, however, I found quite a little time to study ornithology.

In order that the reader may follow me in my reference to localities, I shall give a brief resumé of the time spent in the different parts of the countries.

Landing at St. Nazaire, France, the artillery brigade went to Camp de Coetquedan, in Brittany. This camp is about fifty miles from the coast, and is one of the oldest artillery ranges known, having been started by Napoleon. The country here is hilly and the ground very rocky. We stayed here until February 18, 1918, when we left for the front.

The first hundred and ten days at the front, or until about the last of June, were spent in the Lorraine sector, between the towns of Luneville and Baccart. This was more or less of a quiet sector and I had a little time to myself, but could never go very far from the horse lines,

which were in the little town of Gelecourt and later in Azerailles.

From the time we left here until we reached Germany I had no time to give to birds, as we were made shock troops and were kept pretty busy until the armistice. July 1 to 23 saw us in the Champagne, near Suippes; July 28 to August 16 at Chateau Thierry; September 7 to 27 at St. Mihiel; and until November 11 in the Argonne. There then followed a month of hiking until we settled in Germany, about twelve miles from the Rhine, in the Coblenz area.

My regiment was in two towns in Germany; the first, for two and a half months, was Dernau, situated on the Ahr River, with the Eiffel Mountains on the right and a high plateau rising sharply on the left. I spent much of my time in the mountains, where there were many pines and the birds were rather plentiful. The second town, where we spent our last month, was Eckendorf, which was on the plateau to the left of Dernau, and about six miles distant. There were but few woods here, the town being in the middle of a broad plain.

Besides the birds, I found the game in Germany very interesting. In the fields around Eckendorf the rabbits were very plentiful, especially just before sundown. I have counted as many as sixty in a short walk across the fields. In the mountains, deer and wild pigs were fairly common. I have seen deer (they were a small form of white tail) a number of times, but could never hit one with my automatic. I was also hunting wild pigs with a forester, whom I met, but without results. He, however, had better luck, for he shot ten in one week. One evening, at his house, I tasted the meat of one he had shot that morning and found it quite spicy and gamey, but not too strong to be unpleasant.

I only met two taxidermists while abroad. One was a barber in St. Nazaire, but as I had just landed, I had not mastered French well enough to talk with him very much. The other was in Germany; he was a very good taxider-

mist, and I saw a number of his boars' heads that showed very good workmanship. He was also an artist of some ability in painting animals and birds. I tried to arrange a trade of some skins with him, but he seemed only interested in getting one—an eagle. I thought this rather funny, but found out he wanted me to remove the cotton from the body and replace it with tobacco and cigarettes, whereupon I told him as many things as my knowledge of German would permit and left.

I am indebted to Dr. T. S. Palmer, Secretary of the A. O. U., for my identification of the birds seen, as he was kind enough to have sent to me from London H. K. Swann's "Handbook of British Birds." I was able to identify all birds as seen by this book, and would have been at a great loss without it.

He follows my list of birds, which, while rather incomplete, I believe contains most of the common species:

1. *Turdus viscivorus*—Mistle Thrush.

The only one seen was brought to me dead in Eckendorf, on March 8, 1919. I prepared the specimen, which is now in the collection of Henry K. Coale, Highland Park, Ill.

2. *Turdus iliacus*—Redwing.

A pair was seen near Dernau on February 4, 1919. They reminded me of our robin very much, both in size, action and notes.

3. *Turdus merula*—Blackbird.

A few were seen in France, but I found it more common in Germany from January on.

4. *Erithacus rubecula*—Redbreast.

Very common both in France and Germany. The first one seen was at St. Nazaire in November, 1917. They have a clear, sweet song, and seemed to prefer a thick wood to sing in. This bird is better known as the European Robin.

5. *Daulias luscinia*—Nightingale.

I never saw this bird, but heard the song at night, which could have been no other. In willows, near a river or small stream, one could be sure of hearing them any night during the summer.

6. *Regulus crestatus*—Goldcrest.

7. *Regulus ignicapillus*—Firecrest.

Both these Kinglets were found very common in winter, wherever there were any pines. They are very much like our own Kinglets.

8. *C. cinclus aquaticus*—Dipper.

First seen in Germany, along the Ahr River, on February 19, 1919. I saw the bird here four or five times and think a nest could have been found later. This was the only bird seen.

9. *Acrodon caudata vagans*—British Long-tailed Titmouse.

I first met with this bird in the St. Mihiel sector in September, 1918, when a number of flocks were seen. Later, I found them very common in the Eifel Mountains, in Germany, during the winter.

10. *Parus major*—Great Titmouse.

This bird is very much like his cousin, our Black-capped Chickadee, in his actions, but has more notes and more of a song. Very common in France and Germany.

11. *Parus cristatus*—Crested Titmouse.

Was first seen in November, 1917, at Coetquedan and next in July, 1918, in the Champagne, so it must breed there. Rather common in the Eifel Mountains.

12. *Sitta caesia*—Nuthatch.

Only a few were seen and these in Germany, first in February. In March I saw one dodging in and out of some holes in a tree, but although watched very closely, no nest ever developed.

13. *T. troglodytes*—Wren.

Found commonly throughout France and Germany at all times of the year.

14. *Certhia familiaris*—Tree Creeper.

Can hardly be told from our Brown Creeper. A few were seen in Germany, generally in company with the Kinglets.

15. *Motacilla alba*—White Wagtail.

This was the first bird seen in France, and were found very common there, but did not see many after reaching Germany.

16. *Muscicapa grisola*—Spotted Flycatcher.

The only one recorded was in the Champagne, July 16, 1918. I was hauling ammunition at the front and as we stopped the caisson by some barracks, this bird flew out and onto a wire over my head. These barracks, which had been badly shelled, were surrounded by gun positions, where heavy firing and shelling had been going on. Why that bird stayed during the five-hour barrage that shook the ground, or if it had not been there came there during the heavy firing, is more than I can tell.

17. *Hirundo rustica*—Swallow.

This bird, much like our Barn Swallow, became very common during April, 1918, in Azerailles, and I saw many nests in the barns. The day we were about half way across the ocean, April 22, 1919, I was standing at the stern of the ship, when two swallows flew from the ship, out over my head and back again. I can-

not say whether they were Barn Swallows or the European bird.

18. *Chelidon urbica*—Martin.

Also very common at Azerailles. They are glossy black, with the exception of the rump and underparts, which are white, and build a nest like the Cliff Swallow, under the eaves of buildings.

19. *Carduelis elegans*—Goldfinch.

A large flock was seen three times during February in the mountains in Germany.

20. *Chrysomitris spinus*—Siskin.

One pair in Germany on February 19, 1919, is my only record.

21. *Passer domesticus*—House Sparrow.

Can one go anywhere without finding these birds?

22. *Fringilla cœlebs*—Chaffinch.

Easily the most common bird in France and Germany. I collected a nest and five eggs April 25, 1918, at Gelecourt, France, which is now in the collection of Henry K. Coale.

23. *Emberiza citrinella*—Yellow Hammer.

Next to the Chaffinch, the most common bird seen; often found in company with them.

24. *Garrulus glandarius*—Jay.

One seen in St. Mihiel sector September 22, 1918, and later found fairly common in the mountains in Germany. At first I was kept busy following strange calls, only to trace them to this bird, which is very shy and hard to get a sight of in the pines.

25. *Pica rustica*—Magpie.

To me this is the most beautiful bird in France; they seemed to be the final touch to every field and hedge. April 1, 1918, I saw a Magpie fly from its nest about forty feet up in an oak, but as we were on the march could not stop. Another nest, full of young, not more than ten feet up in a large willow bush, was seen April 21, 1918, but also being on the road at this time, had no chance to examine it closer.

26. *Corvus corone*—Carrion-Crow.

Common everywhere. They have a habit of sailing, so that at a distance one often takes them for a hawk. The nest is just like our Crows'. Two nests were found, one March 28, 1918, with one egg, and the other April 15, 1918, with five eggs. This last set was collected, but my "buddies" did not take oology as seriously as I did, so the eggs never reached home.

27. *Corvus cornix*—Hooded Crow.

Only seen in Germany—first, March 3, 1919,—often in company with the Carrion Crow.

28. *Alauda arvensis*—Sky Lark.

Found commonly at all seasons in the fields, and always singing. At Coetquedan I saw one sing for fifteen minutes while the

brigade was firing a practice barrage. Another time, in the Lorraine sector, one sang off and on for a half hour while many high explosive and gas shells were bursting below him.

29. *Cypselus apus*—Swift.

A few seen in the Lorraine sector during April and May, 1918.

30. *Dendrocopus major*—Great Spotted Woodpecker.

31. *Dendrocopus minor*—Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

Much like our Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers. A few of each were seen at Coetquedan during the winter of 1917-1918.

32. *Geococcyx viridis*—Green Woodpecker.

First seen November 3, 1917, at St. Nazaire and then not met with until once later, February 9, 1919, in Germany.

33. *Cuculus canorus*—Cuckoo.

A few seen around Gelecourt in April and May, 1918. Their call is exactly like the cuckoo clocks.

34. *Asio brachyotus*—Short-eared Owl.

35. *Syrnium aluco*—Tawny Owl.

Mounted specimens of these were seen in Germany. While in Eckendorf an Owl used to call every night near my room, but which one it was I do not know.

36. *Circus cyaneus*—Hen Harrier.

This bird is much like our Marsh Hawk. On the road from Azerailles to the front, during April and May, 1918, I saw a pair frequently. As the caissons came along the road these birds would fly from one telegraph pole to another and finally away over the fields. I believe they had a nest in the vicinity.

37. *Accipiter nisus*—Sparrow Hawk.

A few seen in France and Germany. My closest approach to this bird was on March 19, 1919, in Germany. As I came around a curve in the road I saw a Hawk fly into a flock of Yellow Hamsters and capture one. Dismounting and getting out my glasses, I approached within twenty feet of the Hawk, which had flown to an apple tree and was starting his meal. I watched him for some time and then a poorly aimed rock frightened him away.

38. *Turtur turtur*—Turtle Dove.

Only one record for this bird. On August 19, 1918, the train had stopped and in some willows near the track I saw a dove. I identified the bird when it flew, as the tail was tipped with white.

39. *Perdix cinerea*—Common Partridge.

Seen at different times in the woods in France and Germany. On November 23, 1918, during the march into Germany, we stopped a short time on the road just outside of Arlons-Luxembourg and I saw a flock of seventeen of these birds feeding in a field a short distance away. I watched them with high powered binoculars for about fifteen minutes.



40. *Fulica atra*—Coot.

Saw quite a few from the train in France on the way to Brest, during the second week in April, 1919. Also many mounted specimens in Germany.

41. *Larus argentatus*—Herring Gull.

These birds stayed with the convoy all the way over. None were seen on the return trip, however, until the day we sighted land.

42. *Tachybaptus fluviatilis*—Little Grebe.

December 4, 1918, as we crossed the bridge from Ectenbroch, Luxembourg, into Germany, I saw a pair of these Grebes in the water under the bridge. The long line of artillery over them did not seem to bother them in the least.

Mounted specimens of the following birds were seen in Ahrwieler and Bad Neuenahr, Germany.

43. *Querquedula crecca*—Common Teal.44. *Tetrao tetrix*—Black Grouse.45. *Rallus aquaticus*—Water Rail.

Much like our Virginia Rail.

46. *Numenius arquatus*—Curlew.

A snipe which I never identified as either the Common or the Jack Snipe was seen a number of times. A friend of mine, whom I had hunted with a great deal in Illinois, Corporal Lyman Barr, had a machine gun set up near a small swamp and reported seeing many snipe there. This swamp used to get many "Overs," which were fired at a gun position near it, but according to Barr, the bursting shells and gas disturbed the birds very little, as they just flew a short ways. He saw them here every day for nearly two weeks.

Being so unsettled, and moving so often, I did not get much chance to watch the nests I found. It seemed that we always moved within a day or so after I would find a nest. I was greatly aided in my identifications by a pair of eight-power binoculars, which belonged to the B. C. Detail and which I had access to.